

CEDERBERG MUNICIPALITY

CUSTOMER CARE IMPROVEMENT
STRATEGY



CUSTOMER CARE IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

PURPOSE:

To entrench a service excellence culture, embedded on the Batho Pele principles, within the Cederberg Local Municipality.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To infuse staff commitment, personal sacrifice and dedication to service excellence.

2. To entrench responsiveness throughout the operations of the Cederberg Local Municipality.

3. To instill pride and honour in the provision of services and interface with citizens.

4. To create, nurture and sustain positive service delivery perceptions of the Cederberg Local Municipality to citizens and visitors.

5. To encourage a spirit, culture and practice of collaboration, teamwork and collegially based on Batho Pele/People First principles within the Cederberg Local Municipality.

INTRODUCTION:

Service delivery excellence and responsiveness are the pinnacles of creating positive perceptions of public institutions. Public servants are the custodians of the image of public institutions and, by default, the critical element of service delivery endeavours. The Cederberg Local Municipality's quest for responsiveness and service delivery excellence can only be achieved through active and sustained cooperation of its executive and staff.

BACKGROUND:

Good governance, service delivery impact, responsiveness and people focus succinctly underpins the modus operandi of the Cederberg Local Municipality. The Batho Pele principles, read together with the Values, complement the expectations of the Cederberg Local Municipality from its employees.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS:

The critical stakeholders of the Customer Care Improvement Strategy are:

1. The Executive (Councillors),
2. The Administration (Cederberg staff, the public servants),
3. The Public (Cederberg citizens and visitors).

THE EXECUTIVE:

Councillors, as elected public representatives, are the primary custodians of the service delivery expectations in Cederberg. They are accountable to their constituencies for ensuring that the service delivery expectations are escalated to the administration for prompt action. They define the Cederberg service delivery priorities. These inform the administration of the relative urgency and importance of various competing service delivery pursuits. Public perceptions, expressed in various forms, confirm the executive alignment with public expectations.

THE ADMINISTRATION:

As agents of service delivery, the Cederberg team of public servants creates the service delivery impact that moulds the public perceptions of the Cederberg Local Municipality. This team must be seen to be delivering quality services and making citizens look forward to receiving world-class integrated service delivery. Going beyond the call of duty even under difficult circumstances where there are limited resources must characterize the responsiveness of the administration.

THE PUBLIC:

Citizens are the immediate beneficiaries of service delivery initiatives, hence define the quality of the service delivery efforts. Public perceptions are critical to the measurement of the quality of service delivery pursuits of the Cederberg Local Municipality. The public must reciprocate through payment for municipal services to ensure the viability and sustainability of the Cederberg Local Municipality.

SERVICE DELIVERY EXCELLENCE:

The pillars of service excellence in Cederberg are:

1. The Vision ("A Municipality that works for you").
2. The Values.
3. The Balho Pele Principles.
4. Service Delivery Communications.

THE VISION:

The Cederberg vision, "A municipality that works for you", implies a dedication and commitment to selflessly serve its citizens. This vision signifies an unyielding pursuit of service delivery excellence. The Cederberg Local Municipality implicitly and explicitly distinguishes itself from other municipalities through deploying its resources and energies exclusively for the benefit of its citizens. The Cederberg citizens are thus called upon to expect the highest possible levels of dedication and commitment to service excellence. This includes responding to the citizen's needs and rendering an accountable, transparent and development-oriented administration. This vision inculcates a sense of service based on responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness in delivering services to the Cederberg citizens. This vision must underpin and be an integral part of any service delivery operations, strategic planning, and implementation strategy of all programmes within the Cederberg Local Municipality.

The executive and the administration must thus be seen to be living this vision in all decisions and pursuits.

The Cederberg Local Municipality has developed a unique value system that defines its organizational DNA as comprising of:

THE VALUES:

1. Client Focus
2. Participation/Teambuilding
3. Discipline
4. Punctuality
5. Dignity and Respect
6. Performance driven
7. Training and Development
8. Responsibility
9. Equality
10. Trust

These values have been made available to each and every member of staff as laminated posters in all offices and as laminated pocket size cards. These are available in the three languages of the Western Cape (English, Afrikaans, IsiXhosa). The Change Agents in the various offices have played a major role in the internalization of these values.

THE BATHO PELE PRINCIPLES:

The Cederberg Local Municipality has placed high emphasis on the infusion of Batho Pele principles within its workforce. The Change Agents and key administration personnel were exposed to national training on the Batho Pele principles. Each and every office in the Cederberg Local Municipality displays a laminated Batho Pele poster in the three languages of the Western Cape (English, Afrikaans, IsiXhosa).

Each of these posters lists the Balhro Pele principles as follows:

1. Consultation
2. Service Standards
3. Access
4. Courtesy
5. Information
6. Openness & Transparency
7. Redress
8. Value for Money

These Balhro Pele posters attest to the level of commitment and dedication to service excellence permeating within the Cederberg Local Municipality's workforce. They confirm the readiness to render the highest possible forms of service to those who directly and indirectly interface with the municipality. The reinforcement of these very positive attitudes is critical and crucial to improvement of customer care within the Cederberg Local Municipality.

The meaning of the Balhro Pele principles for the Cederberg Local Municipality is as follows:

1. Consultation

"Ask people what they need"

Consultation is a powerful tool that enriches and shapes policies such as the Integrated Development plan and its implementation in the Local government sphere. Conducting customer satisfaction surveys, interviews with individual users, consultation with interest and community groups, and holding meetings with consumer representative bodies, NGOs¹ and CBOs². Often, more than one method of consultation will be necessary to ensure comprehensiveness and representativeness.

¹ Non-governmental bodies

² Community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations)

2. Service Standards
"Tell people what to expect"
This principle reinforces the need for benchmarks to constantly measure the extent to which Cedarberg citizens are satisfied with the quality of service delivery given their expectations. It also plays an important role in the development of service delivery improvement plans to ensure a better life for Cedarberg citizens. These standards are clear, precise, measurable and cover specific processes so that Cedarberg citizens can judge for themselves whether they are receiving the prescribed level of responsiveness.

3. Access
"Make information and services available to all"
Access to information and services empowers citizens and creates value for money, quality services. This principle reinforces the safeguarding of the right of Cedarberg citizens to access to the various municipal and state services. It also enshrines the right to access to the executive and the administration to escalate issues that impact on the enjoyment of residence of the Cedarberg Local Municipality. It reinforces the right of Cedarberg citizens to information on strategic service delivery issues and challenges.

4. Courtesy
"Treat everyone with respect and consideration"
This principle, properly applied, demystifies the negative perceptions that Cedarberg citizens in general may have about the attitude of Cedarberg staff. The Cedarberg Local Municipality is committed to continuous, honest and transparent communication with its citizens. Cedarberg staff, as public servants, is expected to empathize with citizens and treat them with as much consideration and respect, as they would like for

themselves. This involves communication of services, products, information on problems, which may hamper or delay the efficient delivery of services to promised standards.

5.

Information

"Make information about services available to all"

The Cederberg Local Municipality must regularly seek to make information about the organization, and all other service delivery related matters, available to fellow staff members for dissemination to the public as necessary. Available information about services must be at the point of delivery. Other arrangements must be considered for users who are far from the point of delivery.

6.

Openness and Transparency

"Be open and honest about everything"

Cederberg citizens are entitled to know how the Cederberg Local Municipality operates, how well the municipal resources are utilized and who is in charge. This is to facilitate feedback on service delivery and suggestions for improvement of service delivery improvement. It further ensures accountability and responsiveness to queries raised.

7.

Redress

"Apologize and take corrective action"

Each and every Cederberg staff must identify quickly and accurately when the quality of service is falling below the promised standard and initiate measures to remedy the situation. Complaints must be welcomed as opportunities to improve service. Responses to complaints must remedy weaknesses quickly for the good of the citizen.

Value for Money*"Always do your best"*

The Cederberg Local Municipality fully supports all initiatives that ensure optimum, efficient and effective use of time and municipal resources (staff, stationery, equipment, vehicles, etc.). Any resource in the municipality contributes to the costs of service delivery. Any form of fruitless and wasteful expenditure depletes resources that would have been otherwise been employed for the greater benefit of the Cederberg Local Municipality and its citizens. Failure to do the job right the first time will cause dissatisfaction, rework and waste of resources.

THE CEDERBERG SERVICE DELIVERY PLEDGE

We, as custodians of service delivery, commit and dedicate ourselves to service excellence.

We shall always maintain the highest moral standards. We shall relentlessly ensure fair and equitable service delivery. We shall instill ownership of municipal services to all our people, encouraging communal safeguard of all services for the benefit of all.

We shall treat all people with consideration and respect. We shall be the servants of the people, always putting people first. We shall serve our community with pride, honour and dignity and responding to all service requests at the earliest possible instance. We shall ensure immediate and sustained availability of services to all our people. We shall consistently ensure high quality in all our workmanship. Indeed, we shall restore the trust of our people in the Cederberg Local Municipality.

CEDERBERG SOLEMN UNDERTAKING

We, the members of the Cederberg executive and administration of the Cederberg Local Municipality, recognizing our responsibilities to the people of Cederberg, solemnly undertake to:

1. Uphold service excellence.
2. Work hard to exceed the expectations of us.
3. Respect each other and the people we work with.
4. Always be responsive to service delivery requests and queries.
5. Respect every moment we spend at the municipality's cost.
6. Serve our people with utmost integrity and humility.
7. Eagerly fulfill the promises that we make or that are made on our behalf.
8. Hand over this municipality to our successors being greater and better than it was before our time.

We shall, at all times, be the immediate custodians of a better life in

Cederberg.

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Creating and nurturing a service excellence culture requires established and transparent mechanisms of identifying and recognizing service excellence. The Executive Mayor is the supreme ceremonial figure for recognition of service excellence with the Municipal Manager the administrative custodian of excellence recognition processes. The Directors are responsible for inculcating service excellence and recognizing it within their respective directorates. These measures must be aligned with ensuring responsiveness to the directorate's performance measures.

DIRECTORATES:

Directorate's monthly floating trophies, awarded on the last working day of each month, to high performing individuals and/or teams will reinforce staff commitment and dedication to service excellence. To create and preserve the inspirational value of these trophies, these may only be awarded to any team and/or individual staff member only if there is undisputable/uncontestable evidence of superior service excellence. Managers will identify and motivate in writing (for the record) for potential recipients based on verifiable input from fellow staff or members of the public. Directors will then award the Directorate's floating trophy to the winning submission for public display.

MUNICIPAL MANAGER:

The Municipal Manager's quarterly floating trophy will be awarded to the best performing directorate on a quarterly basis based on the performance indicators. Each directorate's quarterly performance report, with verifiable testimonials from other Directorates, Councilors and members of the public will be the basis of awarding the Municipal Manager's Quarterly Floating Trophy.

EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S ANNUAL FLOATING TROPHY.

The Executive Mayor's annual floating trophy (Cederberg Trophy of Excellence) will be awarded to the best consistently responsive employee or team within the Cederberg Local Municipality. Councillors, Cederberg staff, Members of the public (municipal account holders) will be invited to vote for the best performing employee and/or team at the various municipal service centres (administration offices). The Executive Mayor will award this trophy at the end-of-year function as the highest recognition of service excellence within the Cederberg Local Municipality.

SERVICE DELIVERY RESPONSIVENESS

The Cederberg Local Municipality strives to ensure citizen access to the administration for improved responsiveness to service delivery requests and queries. The administration buildings in the towns of Clanwilliam, Citrusdal, Graatwater, Lamberts Bay and Elands Bay are available as municipal service centres. Any municipal service request or query can be forwarded to the nearest municipal service centre for escalation to the appropriate member of staff. The Clanwilliam Municipal Service Centre is also the headquarters of the Cederberg Local Municipality.

All correspondence must be addressed to The Municipal Manager.

CEDERBERG MUNICIPAL SERVICE CENTRES CONTACT DETAILS:

1. CLANWILLIAM
Physical Address:
2A Voortreeker Street
CLANWILLIAM
8135
Telephone: 027 482 8000
E-mail: admin@cederbergraad.co.za
Private Bag X2
CLANWILLIAM
8135
Fax: 027 482 1933
Postal Address:

2. CITRUSDAL
Physical Address:
12 Muller Street
CITRUSDAL
7340
Telephone: 022 921 2181
E-mail: citrusdal@cederbergraad.co.za
Private Bag X5
CITRUSDAL
7340
Fax: 022 921 2186
Postal Address:

3. LAMBERTS BAY
Physical Address:
42 Church Street
LAMBERTS BAY
8130
Telephone: 027 432 1112
E-mail: lambertsmun@kingsley.co.za
Private Bag
LAMBERTS BAY
8130
Fax: 027 432 1517
Postal Address:

4. ELANDS BAY

Physical Address:

1 School Street
ELANDS BAY
81110

Telephone:
022 972 1745

Postal Address:

P.O. Box 63
ELANDS BAY
8110

Fax:
022 972 1745

5. GRAAFWATER

Physical Address:

Van der Stel Street
GRAAFWATER
8120

Telephone:
027 422 1108

Postal Address:

P.O. Box 239
GRAAFWATER
8120

Fax:
027 422 1109

Each Municipal Service Centre is an escalation point for municipal service requests and queries. Information relating to progress of a service request or query can be requested at any of the Municipal Service Centres.

NOTE WELL:

MUNICIPAL RESPONSIVENESS

The Cederberg Local Municipality Service Centres may be contacted during normal office hours (Monday to Thursday: 07h30 – 16h30, Friday: 07h30 – 16h00) to log complaints, requests and queries.

Standards of Service Excellence:

Telephone Service

1. The telephone service will be available throughout the normal office hours.
2. Each and every incoming call will be answered within 3 rings.
3. Each and every telephonic service request and query will be dealt with within 5 minutes.

4. Each and every municipal service centre will keep a log book detailing a reference number, time of call, caller's name and contact number, nature of call, escalation directorate.

5. The reference number format will indicate the originator (staff member dealing with call), the time & date of call and sequence number of the call (e.g. TM/1310/17/0708/05 for the 5th call received at 13h10 on the 17th of July 2008 by Thanda Makhoba).
6. Each administration will compile a monthly report of all telephonic queries received and the reference numbers generated.

Correspondence (Letters & E-mail)

1. All letters and faxes will be forwarded to the Records Section in Clanwilliam, on a daily basis, for registration and forwarding to the Office of the Municipal Manager (Communications Officer) within 1 working day.
2. The Office of the Municipal Manager will generate an acknowledgement of receipt for each and every letter/correspondence received.

3. The Office of the Municipal Manager will escalate correspondence to the relevant directorate for action, investigation and/or remedial action and draft response.
4. The relevant directorate will feedback on the correspondence received to the office of the Municipal Manager within 3 working days. This may also be a request for extended time to address the matter.
5. The Office of the Manager will generate a response to the customer within 5 working days of receiving the correspondence.
6. A standard e-mail address will be promoted (e.g. cederberg@cederbergraad.co.za) with an autoreply detailing commitment to service excellence.

Escalation of Complaints, Service Requests and Queries

1. Each escalated complaint, service request or query shall be logged on escalation to indicate the recipient, time & date of escalation, and the reference number (e.g. GV/1410/180708 TM/1310/17/0708/05 indicating escalated to Gerrit Valentyn at 14h10 on the 18th of July 2008).
2. Any complaint, service request and/or query not resolved within 10 working days will be escalated to the Office of the Municipal Manager.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Customer Care Improvement Strategy will be subject to annual review and IT technological support shall be explored for automation of query handling processes. This will include, but not limited to, an informative e-mail autoreply to a specific query/complaints handling e-mail address (e.g. helpdesk@cederberg.gov.za).

